

# CJA Interpreter Services

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**Background** The services of an interpreter may be required in a case in which counsel are appointed under the Criminal Justice Act.

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**Prior Authorization** Prior authorization should be secured for all interpreting services. CJA Form 21 should be utilized for this purpose.

Failure to obtain prior authorization may result in the disallowance of any amount claimed for compensation in excess of \$300 (exclusive of expenses).

If prior authorization has been obtained and later it is determined that the cost of the interpreter service will exceed the initial estimate, further authorization for the additional amount must be obtained.

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**Arrangements for Services** After counsel has procured authorization from the Court for the services of an interpreter, the reason for interpreter services will determine who is responsible for the arrangement of those services.

IF INTREPRETING SERVICES ARE FOR	THEN THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR SERVICES IS THROUGH
Attorney/client conferences	CJA Counsel
Court appearances	Clerk's Office
Prior to a court hearing or in conjunction with a court proceeding	CJA Counsel
Proffers or meetings with the government	U.S. Attorney

If counsel desires the services of an interpreter immediately prior to a scheduled court hearing, it is counsel's responsibility to make those arrangements with the interpreter so as not to delay the hearing. The name and phone number of the interpreter who will be used at the court proceeding can be obtained from the clerk of courts.

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## CJA Interpreter Services, Continued

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**Recordkeeping** Because interpreters are compensated from either the CJA fund, the Department of Justice or the General Treasury, depending on the nature of the activity, all interpreters must maintain an accurate accounting of their time. If an interpreter's bill for attorney/client time exceeds time in court, the interpreter's bill will be forwarded to CJA counsel for inclusion on the CJA 21 voucher.

For example, if the interpreter meets for an hour meeting with counsel and the defendant prior to a 20 minute Rule 11 court proceeding, the interpreter would forward his/her bill to CJA counsel for inclusion on the CJA 21 voucher. (This includes all travel expenses associated with the interpreter's appearance in court.)

All payments are subject to audit and records must be retained for three years after approval of the final voucher.

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**Compensation** Compensation may not exceed \$1000 (exclusive of expenses) unless payment in excess of that amount is certified by the court as necessary to provide fair compensation for services of an unusual character or duration. The amount of the excess payment must be approved by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals or his designee.

Attendance fees for **certified**<sup>1</sup> interpreters are as follows:

Duration	Fees
One half day (4 hours or less)	\$178
Full day (more than 4 hours)	\$329
Overtime (over 8 hours)	\$ 49/hour

Attendance fees for **non-certified** interpreters are as follows:

Duration	Fees
One half day (4 hours or less)	\$ 86
Full day (more than 4 hours)	\$156
Overtime (over 8 hours)	\$ 27/hour

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<sup>1</sup> Certified interpreters have successfully completed the written and oral Federal Court Interpreter Examinations administered by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

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## CJA Interpreter Services, Continued

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### Compensation (continued)

Travel expenses, including parking, are reimbursable. Reimbursement will be allowed for actual (not estimated) expenses. Supporting documentation, such as receipts, must be submitted for single item expenses in excess of \$50.

Travel beyond 100 miles (round trip) must be arranged in advance through the Clerk's Office and a written travel authorization must be issued by the presiding judicial officer.

Mileage rates are as follows:

Dates of Travel	Rate Per Mile
January 22, 2001 – January 21, 2002	\$0.345
January 22, 2002 to December 31, 2002	\$0.365
January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003	\$0.360
January 1, 2004 to February 3, 2005	\$0.375
February 4, 2005 to present	\$0.405

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### Completion of CJA 21 Voucher

A line-by-line "Instructions for CJA Form 21" is provided to court-appointed counsel. These instructions should be followed to complete the CJA 21 Voucher completely and accurately.

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### Approval/ Payment

Upon receipt by the Clerk's Office of a fully complete and accurate CJA 21 voucher, with appropriate attachments, the vouchers are:

- Reviewed for accuracy and completeness
- Approved at the District Court level
- Approved by the First Circuit Court of Appeals (if necessary)
- Processed and entered into the CJA computer system

Checks will be issued by the Administrative Office in Washington, D.C. to counsel and will include the docket number and name of the defendant. If the amount of the CJA 21 voucher has been "cut back," the reason for the reduction will be included on the check.

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## CJA Interpreter Services, Continued

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**Public  
Disclosure**

Congress has mandated that the amounts paid to court-appointed counsel may be disclosed to the public, subject to the consideration of special circumstances.

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**Questions?**

If you have comments or questions, please contact one of the individuals listed below:

Susan Hall, Case Manager  
U.S. District Court  
156 Federal Street  
Portland, Maine 04101  
(207) 780-3356

Brenda DeRoche, Case Manager  
U.S. District Court  
202 Harlow Street  
Bangor, Maine 04401  
(207) 945-0575

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